

## What?

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Center for Biological Diversity have agreed to a settlement to implement interim restrictions on vehicle use in portions of the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area in response to a recent lawsuit filed by the Center regarding the Endangered Species Act.

The interim restrictions will be in effect until BLM consults with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan. These restrictions are part of an overall legal settlement intended to reduce the effects of BLM's implementation of the CDCA Plan on threatened and endangered species throughout the California Desert.

The restrictions will focus on a vehicle closure north of the wilderness area and south of Mammoth Wash, two vehicle closures in the central portion of the dunes, and a 160-acre vehicle closure south of I-8. Motorized travel will not be allowed inside the closures.

The current fee program at the dunes will not be affected by this action.

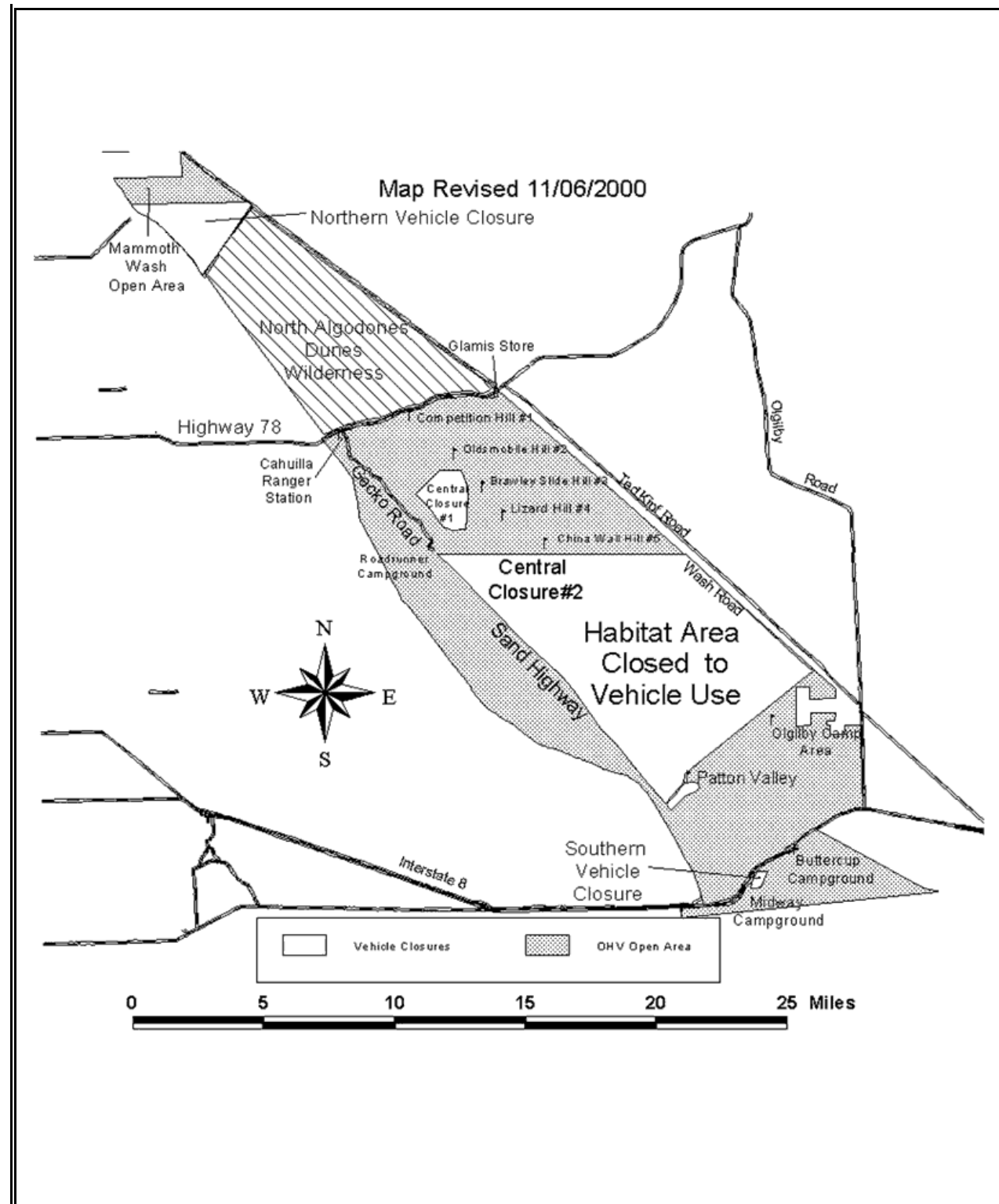
## Why?

The interim closure is designed to protect essential habitat of the Peirson's milk-vetch (a Federally listed plant species) while allowing OHV recreation to continue in the heavily used areas of the dunes. The Peirson's milk-vetch was listed as a threatened species by the USFWS in 1998. The continued survival of this plant relies on the protection of its dune habitat.

The boundaries of the closures are based on monitoring data gathered by the BLM. The closures are placed around known populations of the milk-vetch while avoiding the most popular riding areas. While these restrictions are controversial, BLM worked hard during the settlement negotiations to maintain public access while meeting its legal commitments to protect the listed plant under the Endangered Species Act. These interim closures will serve as a way to allow OHV recreation and the plant to co-exist in this unique area, until a final management decision is made in the Recreation Area Management Plan.

## Areas Not Affected by Closure

The closures will not affect the heavily used areas between the Glamis store and Gecko Road, areas around Buttercup and Dune buggy Flats, Patton Valley, and Hills 1-5.



## Closed Areas

The closures areas are located in the northern, central and southern portions of the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area, and include Hills 6&7. (See map for boundaries). All closures will be marked with red posts and “No Motorized Vehicle” signs. These posts will be placed at intervals of 1/10 to 1/4 of a mile depending on the terrain and use patterns. Following is a general description of each closure.

- **Northern Closure Boundary**- The western boundary is located along the New Coachella Canal. The southern boundary of the closure is common with the northern boundary of the North Algodones Wilderness Area. The eastern boundary follows along the Ted Kipf Road for several hundred yards north of the wilderness boundary. The northern boundary follows a section line across the dunes to the canal.

-**Central Closure #1 Boundary**- This circular shaped closure is located approximately 1 mile east of Gecko Road, between Gecko and Roadrunner Campgrounds.

-**Central Closure #2 Boundary**- The western boundary begins 1/4 mile south of Roadrunner campground and follows the Sand Highway to “5 mile drop” on the New Coachella Canal. The road into Patton Valley from the “5 mile drop” will remain open, but the dunes directly to the south of the road will be closed. The southern boundary is located directly north of Patton Valley and the Olgilby Camp Area. The eastern boundary follows the wash road. The northern boundary starts about 9 miles south of the Glamis Store and follows a section line across the dunes to the Sand Highway.

- **Southern Closure Boundary**- A small 160-acre closure is located just east of Midway Campground and south of the Grays Well Road.

### Why should I comply?

Dunes visitors must comply with these vehicle closures, as future management decisions will be based on their success.

**Violations of the closures could result in the expansion of the boundaries of the closure areas through further legal action!**

The closure will be strictly enforced by BLM Law Enforcement Rangers and citations will be issued to violators.

**For more information visit the El Centro Field Offices Web Page at [www.ca.blm.gov/elcentro](http://www.ca.blm.gov/elcentro)**

# Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area



## Management of Peirson's milk-vetch and Interim Vehicle Restrictions